

Pesach Guide

Prepared by the Rabbinical Assembly Committee on Jewish Law and Standards

The ownership of *chametz* (leaven) during Pesach is prohibited. Therefore, we arrange for the sale of the *chametz* to a non-Jew. The transfer, *mechirat chametz* is accomplished by appointing an agent to handle the sale. It is valid and legal transfer of ownership. At the end of the holiday, the agent arranges for the reversion of ownership of the now-permitted *chametz*.

Since the eating of *chametz* is prohibited on Pesach, and since many common foods contain some admixture of *chametz*, guidance is necessary when shopping and preparing for Pesach.

What follows is a general guideline. However, if you have any specific questions please consult a knowledgeable authority.

Prohibited foods on Pesach include the following: leavened bread, cakes, biscuits, crackers, cereal, coffees containing cereal derivatives, wheat, barley, oats, spelt, rye, and all liquids containing ingredients or flavors made from grain alcohol.

Most Ashkenazic authorities have added the following foods (*kitniyot*) to the above list: rice, corn, millet, legumes (beans and peas; however, string beans are permitted). The Conservative movement's Committee on Jewish Law and Standards permits peanuts and peanut oil. Some Ashkenazic authorities permit the use of legumes in a form other than their natural state, for example, corn sweeteners, corn oil, soy oil. Sephardic authorities permit the use of all of the above.

PERMITTED FOODS:

A. The following foods do not require a *kosher le-Pesach* label if purchased prior to Pesach: Unopened packages or containers of natural coffee without cereal additives (However, be aware that coffees produced by General Foods are not kosher for Passover unless marked KP); sugar, pure tea (not herbal tea); salt (not iodized); pepper; natural spices; frozen fruit juices without additives; frozen (uncooked) vegetables; milk; butter; cottage cheese; cream cheese; ripened cheeses such as cheddar (hard), muenster (semi-soft) and Camembert (soft); frozen (uncooked) fruit (without additives); baking soda.

B. The following foods do not require a *kosher le-Pesach* label if purchased before or during Pesach:
Fresh fruits and vegetables, eggs, fresh fish and fresh meat.

C. The following foods require a *kosher le-Pesach* label if purchased before or during Pesach:
All baked products (matzah, cakes, matzah flour, farfel, matzah meal, and any products containing matzah); canned or bottled fruit juices; canned tuna; wine; vinegar; liquor; oils; dried fruits; candy; chocolate flavored milk; ice cream; yogurt and soda.

D. The following processed foods (canned, bottled or frozen), require a *kosher le-Pesach* label if purchased during Pesach:

Milk, butter, juices, vegetables, fruit, milk products, spices, coffee, tea, and fish as well as all foods listed in Category C.

DETERGENTS: Powdered and liquid detergents do not require a *kosher le-Pesach* label.

KASHERING OF UTENSILS: The process of kashering utensils depends on how the utensils are used. According to Jewish law, leaven can be purged from a utensil by the same process in which it was absorbed in the utensil. Therefore, utensils used in cooking are kashered by boiling, those used in broiling are kashered by fire and heat, and those used only for cold food are kashered by rinsing.

A. EARTHENWARE (china, pottery, etc.) may not be kashered. However, fine translucent chinaware which has not been used for over a year may be used if scoured and cleaned in hot water.

B. METAL (wholly made of metal) *UTENSILS USED IN FIRE* (spit, broiler) must first be thoroughly scrubbed and cleansed and then made as hot as possible. Those used for cooking or eating (silverware, pots) must be thoroughly scrubbed and cleaned and completely immersed in boiling water. Pots should not be used for a period of at least 24 hours between the cleaning and the immersion in boiling water. Metal baking utensils cannot be kashered.

C. OVENS AND RANGES: Every part that comes in contact with food must be thoroughly scrubbed and cleaned. Then, the oven and range should be heated as hot as possible for a half hour. If there is a broil setting, it should be used. Self-cleaning ovens should be scrubbed and cleaned and then put through the self-cleaning cycle. Continuous cleaning ovens must be kashered in the same manner as regular ovens.

MICROWAVE OVENS, which do not cook the food by means of heat, should be cleaned, and then a cup of water should be placed inside. Then the oven should be turned on until the water boils. A microwave oven that has a broiling element cannot be kashered for Pesach.

D. GLASSWARE: Authorities disagree as to the method for kashering drinking utensils. One opinion requires soaking in water for three days, changing the water every 24 hours. The other opinion requires only a thorough scrubbing before Pesach or putting them through a dishwasher.

Glass Cookware: There is a difference of opinion as to whether it is to be kashered. One opinion is that it must be kashered. After a thorough cleansing, water should be boiled in them and made to overflow. The other opinion is that only a thorough cleansing is required.

Glass Bakeware, like metal bakeware, may not be kashered.

E. DISHWASHER: After not using the machine for a period of 24 hours, a full cycle with detergent should be run.

F. ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES: If the parts that come into contact with the *chametz* are removable, they can be kashered in the appropriate way (if metal, follow the rules for metal utensils). If the parts are permanent, the appliance cannot be kashered. (All exposed parts should be thoroughly cleaned.)

G. TABLES, CLOSETS AND COUNTERS: If used with *chametz*, they should be thoroughly cleaned and covered, and then they may be used.

H. KITCHEN SINK: A metal sink can be kashered by thoroughly cleaning and then pouring boiling water over it. A porcelain sink should be cleaned and a sink rack used. If, however, dishes are to be soaked in a porcelain sink, a dish basin must be used.

I. *CHAMETZ AND NON-PASSOVER UTENSILS*: Non-Passover dishes, pots and *chametz* whose ownership has been transferred, should be separated, locked up or covered and marked in order to prevent accidental use.